Suddha-Bhakti

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suddha-bhakata-carana-renu

bhajana-anukula

bhakata-seva parama-siddhi

prema-latikara mula

The dust from the lotus feet of pure devotees is conducive to devotional service,

and service to the Vaisnavas is itself the supreme perfection and the root of the tender creeper of divine love.

Preface

Suddha bhakti is a book about pure (suddha) devotion (bhakti). Such a book should be of great value on the threshold of the third millennium when the world is overburdened more than ever before with war, intolerance, hatred

and atheism.

Bhakti-yoga is the spiritual practice by which the soul can reunite (yoga) in love (bhakti), with the Supreme Lord, for only divine love makes life worth living. This reunion should not however be misunderstood as the merging of the individual soul (jivatma) with the formless, all-pervading aspect of the Absolute, the Brahman. Love is a relational affair and bhakti-yoga implies an eternal relationship between creator and created, sustainer and sustained, lover and beloved, or God and the soul.

The immortal Bhagavad-gita, probably the most celebrated and widely-read sacred text of ancient India, stresses the importance of acaryopasana, or adherence to the spiritual guide, for all those who wish to reconnect with the Divinity. Elevated and self-realized souls who can awaken one's spiritual nature are, as the Gita states, very rare. We therefore feel fortunate to present this book of selected discourses by Srila Bhakti Ballabha Tirtha Maharaja, in whom we recognize all the characteristics of pure devotion. He is a humble but powerful practitioner and teacher of the Gaudiya Vaisnava tradition of divine love propagated by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, the 15th-century master of devotional ecstasy. This book is compiled from lectures given on his second visit to Europe in 1999.

The first part of this book, entitled Sambandha, delineates the foundation of knowledge necessary to enter a life of devotion. Part two, entitled Abhidheya, discusses the means of practice, sadhana, in which a sadhaka must engage to attain the desired result (sadhya). For the followers of Sri Caitanya this goal is prema-bhakti: spontaneous, unalloyed loving devotion to Vrajendranandana Sri Krsna, the divine Gopala (cowherd boy) of the beautiful transcendental pasture grounds of Vrndavana, Whom the Gaudiya Vaishnavas accept as God Himself. This ultimate aim is also known as Prayojana, the title and focus of the last chapter of this book.

We hope that all practitioners -- aspiring, novice and advanced -- will relish this book. We pray to Srila Tirtha Maharaja for his continuous blessings upon all sincere sadhakas pursuing the path of devotion. May Sri Krsna be pleased with this attempt to serve the lotus feet of His pure devotee.

Humbly,
The publishers.

Introduction

Three topics are discussed in the Vedas, the sacred scriptures of India. In Sanskrit, these are called sambandha, abhidheya and prayojana. Sambandha concerns the nature of ultimate reality: who is God, what is the essential nature of the soul and the world of our experience, and what is their mutual relationship? After obtaining knowledge of relationships, or sambandha, the practice of worship or devotion begins. This is called abhidheya, which is synonymous with sadhana or spiritual practice. There are different kinds of sadhana, but sadhana proper is devotion or bhakti. What, then, is our ultimate goal -- the prayojana? Our highest objective is love for Krsna, Krsna prema.

In the Bhagavad-gita, Krsna states that He is the cause of all causes. In the ultimate sense, Krsna is considered to be the Supreme Lord because we can experience all varieties of relationships with Him.

Once we recognize Krsna as the supreme goal, how can we get love for Him, Krsna prema? The only way of getting Krsna is through bhakti. The

sadhana is bhakti, and the ultimate goal of our life and practices is prema -- transcendental, divine love for Sri Krsna. None of the four purusarthas, or aims of human life mentioned in the Vedas (dharma, artha, kama and moksa) can be considered the ultimate goal. Dharma means mundane sacrifices performed for obtaining benefits in the upper worlds of the material universe. If we have a desire for dharma, we cannot attain the highest treasure of prema. Artha means wealth, kama means fulfillment of lust, and moksa means desire for salvation. But none of these things will lead us to the ultimate goal of life, divine love of God. We have to perform bhakti to get Krsna prema. Our life is meant for the cultivation of bhakti and thus we should begin the process of devotion without a minute's delay.

Sambandha

What is our conception of ultimate reality? Who is God? Who are the jiva souls, the living beings of the material world? What are the relationships between God, the soul and the world? In Sanskrit, knowledge of these

things is called sambandha (relationship). These topics have been discussed in detail in the Vedas, the sacred scriptures of India, and all saints throughout history have spoken and expounded on their understanding of them.

Caitanya Mahaprabhu preached the doctrine of divine love based on the evidence of the Vedas. Kaviraja Gosvami explained this in a nutshell:

veda-sastra kahe sambandha abhidheya prayojana
krsna prapya sambandha bhakti praptyera sadhana
abhidheya nama bhakti prema prayojana
(Caitanya Caritamrta 2.20.124-125)

What is the ultimate goal of life according to the Vedas? It is divine love for the Supreme Lord, Sri Krsna. The etymological meaning of the name Krsna is "one who attracts and gives happiness to all." Krsna is the all-attracting principle. He possesses infinite qualities to attract us and is therefore the Supreme Person. He is the embodiment of all

existence, all knowledge and all bliss.

There is nothing equal to Him or superior to Him. There cannot be more than one Absolute or more than one infinite being. If there is something outside the infinite, infinity loses its meaning and the infinite becomes finite. Not even a particle of dust can be imagined outside the infinite or outside the Absolute. The Absolute is defined as that which exists in, for, and by itself. Everything is within Krsna and everything is subservient to Him.

The infinite is one and it has a personal identity. God is the all-conscious substance. Consciousness implies three things: jnana, kriya and iccha -- thinking, feeling and willing. When we look at the living beings of this world, we can see that a body is considered to be a person or a conscious unit for only as long as spirit is present in it. That which exhibits no thinking, feeling or willing is only matter and nobody considers dead matter to be a person.

The highest aspect of the absolute conscious substance is called Bhagavan and He possesses the three qualities of consciousness in an absolute way. If we can accept that an individual spirit soul is a person, then what is

the difficulty in accepting that absolute consciousness is personal? He is an unlimited person. Though He has a distinct individual form, He is unlimited and exhibits innumerable forms and pastimes.

When a person takes the role of a king and sits on his throne, he wears a certain kind of dress, but when he goes to the playground to amuse himself, he dresses differently. When he goes to bed, he will again change into a different kind of clothing. Throughout all these changes of dress, the person remains the same. The same principle applies to the Supreme Lord, who manifests different forms and pastimes for the sake of His loving devotees.

Even as a person, the Supreme Lord is infinite; His realms are infinite and an infinite numbers of souls emanate from Him. Human beings cannot fathom the Supreme Lord's creation by means of their finite intellect, finite mental capacity, and limited sense organs. He is beyond all our attempts to know Him by our own power.

Nothing cannot be the cause of something. All created things must have their cause in something other than themselves. We are like the particles of the sun that come from the sun, the substance. Just as the sun shines,

so do its particles. Likewise, the Supreme Lord is the possessor of all kinds of potencies and the souls that emanate from Him are aspects of one of these potencies, just like the rays that come from the sun. The souls exist in Him, exist by Him, and they should exist for Him. But they can n ever be considered to be identical with the Lord, any more than the rays of the sun can be considered identical with the sun substance.

In seventh chapter of the Bhagavad-gita ("The Song of the Lord") Krsna says with great emphasis,

mattah parataram nanyat
kincid asti dhananjaya
mayi sarvam idam protam
sutre mani-gana iva

"There is nothing superior to Me. The whole universe is emerging from Me. I am beyond the comprehension of the conditioned souls, the finite beings, and I am supremely superior to the formless Brahman and the indwelling Paramatma, the objects of worship of the jnanis and yogis."

janma karma ca me divyam

evam yo vetti tattvatah

tyaktva deham punar janma

naiti mam eti so'rjuna.

(Bhagavad-gita 4.9)

"My birth and My pastimes are transcendental. Unlike human beings who are compelled to take birth by their own previous actions, My birth is a pastime to satisfy My devotees. To give them parental service, I accept them as parents."

ajo 'pi sann avyayatma

bhutanam isvaro 'pi san

prakrtim svam adhisthaya

sambhavamy atma-mayaya.

(Bhagavad-gita 4.6)

"I have no birth, but I engage in these pastimes to fulfill the desire of those devotees who want to serve Me as their son. Those who are enveloped by My illusory energy consisting of the three primary material qualities, sattva, rajas, and tamas, think My body to be that of an ordinary human being."

We may think that Krsna is born in the way we were, but this is a mistake. As with everything else, Krsna's birth has both a morphological and an ontological aspect. Whatever we can know about an entity by means of our material senses and material intellect is its external or morphological aspect. But there is also an ontological side which we cannot know through our finite instruments.

Let us expand on this idea further. Immanuel Kant of Germany was one of western philosophy's most intelligent thinkers. In his critical philosophy, he named the above-mentioned aspects as "the thing as it appears" and "the thing in itself" or "the thing as it is." According to Kant, human beings can understand a thing as it appears, but have no capacity to know it as it is. In his Ctitique of Pure Reason, Kant argued

extensively to prove this contention.

Human beings, he says, can only know things as they appear to the senses and the understanding. Through the senses, human beings can the forms of things and through understanding they can conceive of them in terms of categories. This understanding is a special capacity called a priori. Inherent in the capacity of human understanding is the ability to know a thing as it appears. But a human cannot have knowledge of the thing in itself. This is the basis of Kant's critical philosophy.

Another German philosopher, Hegel, tried to refute Kant's contention. According to Hegel, we may indeed arrive at knowledge of the thing in itself through speculative reasoning. Bradley, a British philosopher, also dealt with this problem in detail. His claim was that we cannot come into contact with the thing in itself by reasoning alone, but we can acquire knowledge of it through immediate perception and feeling, by which the thing in itself will appear before us. Otherwise, we can not succeed in seeing things in their deeper quality through our capacity of reasoning alone. There will always be some barrier between the object of reason and the reasoning, and this prevents us from having contact with the thing in itself.

Now, these philosophers have tried to approach the ultimate reality with their intellectual arrogance. But what is the actual meaning of philosophy? Philo-sofia -- love of knowledge. But what kind of knowledge do they pursue? They are only interested in empirical knowledge, that which is acquired by the sense organs, mind, and intelligence.

In the Bhagavad-gita, the mind and intelligence are said to belong to the external potency of the Supreme Lord. According to the Gita, that which is transcendental cannot be comprehended by the elements of matter, whether they be gross or subtle. But in this material world we are always trying to determine the ultimate reality through empirical processes.

In accordance with revealed scriptures like Bhagavad-gita, the theistic aspect of Indian philosophy emphasizes the finite nature of human beings. Our intellect is finite; our mental capacity is finite, and anything produced by our mind and intellect must also be finite. Hence we cannot determine our ultimate cause because it is beyond the jurisdiction of these finite instruments. Anything a human being determines by his finite understanding will be a concoction. Therefore, we should not attempt to manufacture reality in our intellectual or mental factory. As conditioned

souls, we are limited, as is our ability to gain knowledge through our own capacities. It is beyond the material intellect to determine the infinite.

The absolute truth exists always and it is our duty to find out how to see that reality through the deductive process. We cannot approach the absolute truth through the inductive process. So, how are we to see that truth? God is the cause of all causes; He is self-effulgent and self-luminous. We must therefore approach the truth of God through His grace.

When one is enlightened by the knowledge that destroys ignorance, all things are revealed in their absolute quality. The sun rises and lights up everything in the daytime. If you want to see the sun at night, is it possible? Even if you bring together all the lights of a great city like New York you will not meet with success. As the sun is self-luminous, your attempt to experience it will not work because your nature is intrinsically different from the sun's. You have to wait for the rays of the sun before you can see it. Your ability to see the sun will not decrease if you have no artificial light at all, any more than it will increase if you have an enormous searchlight. The light of this world cannot help us in seeing the sun. The sun's own rays alone can give us

this capacity. Likewise, the Supreme Lord is self-effulgent, self-luminous, and by His grace alone will we be able to see Him.

In the Bhagavad-gita Krsna has described two kinds of potencies: para and apara. The para is the superior potency and the apara, the inferior. One is spiritual, the other material. In the material world we find the eight elements that belong to the apara potency: earth, water, fire, air, sky, mind, intelligence and perverted ego. The gross material body is composed of the five gross elements and the subtle body is composed of mind (manas), intelligence (buddhi) and perverted ego (ahankara), which is not the real ego. When we think of our ego in reference to the Supreme Lord, then we understand Him to be our master and that we, therefore, are His eternal servants. But when we focus on worldly things and think of ourselves as the enjoyers -- then this is the perverted ego.

We feel some sort of pleasure or joy when engaged in sensual enjoyment, but the consequence is suffering. Disease inevitably follows unrestricted enjoyment. Ultimately, all acts performed on the basis of the perverted ego lead to suffering. So, the question is: shall we remain in this world eternally, perpetually causing ourselves such suffering?

The body has its origin, it will remain for some time and eventually it will perish. Whether the body you have received is very healthy or weak, it is not eternal. If you have good health and the capacity to enjoy, you will become so attached to your body as a result of your enjoyments that you will not want to leave it at the time of death. But still you will have to go. You will be taken forcibly by the messengers of death and your attachments will cause you much suffering.

Because they are enveloped in the illusory energy of the Lord, some people misunderstood this world; they think it is ananda, or blissful, and that they can thus achieve happiness here. The Lord is the cause of this world. When people become averse to the Lord due to their relative independence, His shadow comes to envelop them. This shadow appears to them to be sat-cit-ananda, eternally conscious and blissful, but in fact it has no actual substance.

Whatever you see is like a dream. While you are dreaming, you think you are seeing reality, but when you awaken from the dream you realize its falsity. In this sense, the whole world is a dream. When we awaken, we will see that everything in it is false, or maya. Maya means ma-ya, "not that." This world and the eight elements that comprise it are not eternal.

However, the real self in contact with the world is something entirely different in substance.

apareyam itas tv anyam
prakrtim viddhi me param
jiva-bhutam maha-baho
yayedam dharyate jagat

(Bhagavad-gita 7.5)

"There is another potency which is distinct from matter; it is known as the para potency, the superior spiritual energy. The individual souls, the jivas, are the outcome of the spiritual energy. They make up the marginal potency of the Supreme Lord Sri Krsna."

In the Gita Krsna says that the jivas are His parts, but what kind of parts? Not parts of the substance, but parts of His marginal potency. Likewise, a particle of the sun's ray is not the substance of the sun.

This is the way we must understand the Supreme Lord's infinite potencies, or saktis. We can divide these potencies into three main categories --

internal, marginal and external -- but in reality, they are infinite.

All souls are manifested by the marginal potency (jiva-sakti). When we become averse to Sri Krsna, the external potency (maya-sakti, or apara potency) envelops us and we come to this world of birth, death and the threefold afflictions.

When we submit to Sri Krsna, He will come in the form of grace incarnate or the internal potency. And the concrete form of the internal potency (svarupa-sakti) is the suddha-bhakta, the sad-guru or the spiritual guide. By the grace of the suddha-bhakta we can enter into the transcendental realm of infinite bliss.

So what should we do and what should we not do? The main criterion has been mentioned in the Padma Purana:

smartavyah satatam visnur
vismartavyo na jatucit
sarve vidhi-nisedhah syur
etayor eva kinkarah
(Bhaktirasamrta-sindhu 1.2.8)

"You have to remember Krsna always. We have to do whatever is required in order to remember Him. For this reason the saints have prescribed many different forms of devotional practice. Outside of these principal devotional forms, other activities can be undertaken that will help us to remember Krsna. The criterion is that we should always remember Krsna and secondly that we should never forget Him."

Nobody on earth, whether atheist or theist, can prove that the body is the person. We consider the body to be a person only as long as consciousness is present in it. In fact, the existence that makes one a person, his real identity, is called sat-cit-ananda. In the Sanskrit language we use the words atma or jivatma. You may use the word "soul" to identify the eternally existing principle within the body.

When consciousness leaves this body, the body no longer exhibits personality. You can preserve it chemically for a long time, but nobody finds happiness on seeing it. The life has gone. As long as the spirit soul, which is sat-cit-ananda, is present in that body, it is considered a

person.

Every living being has a profound desire to live in this world eternally. Eternal life, which in Sanskrit is called sat, is the demand of every sentient being. We all desire knowledge, which indicates that we have a knowledge principle, or cit, for something devoid of knowledge cannot have the desire to know. Similarly, if one is devoid of bliss, then one cannot desire bliss or ananda. We all have the desire to get ananda, we have the desire for knowledge, and we have the desire to exist eternally. These d esires are the indications of our identity as the atma or sat-cit-ananda.

Nobody wants to die, but we are enveloped by the illusory energy of the Supreme Lord that consists of three primeval qualities: sattva, rajas, and tamas. The material bodies of living beings are created by rajo-guna; once created, they are maintained and sustained by sattva-guna; ultimately, all are destroyed by tamo-guna.

When we are enveloped by this illusory energy, we get these temporary bodies. We take birth, we remain for some time, and then we die. We are not the non-eternal body but rather the eternal sentient being residing in the body, that is, the atma or soul. Krsna says in Bhagavad-gita: (2.20)

na jayate mriyate va kadacin

nayam bhutva bhavita va na bhuyah

ajo nityah sasvato' yam purano

na hanyate hanyamane sarire

"This body is born, it will remain for sometime, and it will die. But the atma knows no birth and no death."

dehino 'smin yatha dehe

kaumaram yauvanam jara

tatha dehantara-praptir

dhiras tatra na muhyati

(Bhagavad-gita 2.13)

"After passing through childhood and youth, and after that, from old age to death, you will find that death is just another kind of transformation. When the body perishes, the atma will not perish. It is eternal. So we are eternal; nobody can kill us. We are sat-cit-ananda, but we are running after asat, acit and niranandа -- that which is devoid of existence, devoid of knowledge, and devoid of bliss."

How can we get peace by cultivating these material things? What is the value of this eye? I could destroy it in a second with a stick and in a moment the whole world of vision would become completely inaccessible to me. I could also pierce my eardrum and the whole world of sound would be beyond reach. Such is the nature of the material senses.

How real is our experience if we depend on our material senses alone? How real are our sensations? But if we recognize the indications of our real self, our sat-cit-ananda nature, we live and feel the existence of the soul.

In one of the oldest holy scriptures of the world, the ‰g Veda, it is written:

om tad visnoh paramam padam sada
pasyanti surayah. diviva caksur-atatam.
tad vipraso vipanyavo jagavamsah
samindhate visnor yat paramam padam

"The lotus feet of the Supreme Lord are transcendental. He cannot be

comprehended by the material senses, either subtle or gross. He is beyond the comprehension of mind and intellect. He is transcendental, atindriya, beyond our sensual comprehension."

The Sanskrit word "idam" means "this" in English. When we experience with our material senses, we are seeing "this." But the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord are transcendental -- "that." The object of devotion is one -- the Supreme Lord's lotus feet. How do the devotees see Him? Is it through their own capacities? Diviva caksur atatam. He is Self-effulgent; therefore, devotees who have His mercy can see Him. We cannot see Krsna without His grace.

All the jivas are eternally related to Krsna as parts of His potency. He is absolute. There is nothing greater than Him or equal to Him. Without His will, nobody has the capacity to know Him.

Some people give the following analogy to explain their understanding of the route to Krsna. They say: There is a great city called Rome. Is there only one road leading to Rome? No, there are hundreds and thousands of roads. Bhagavan, the Supreme Lord, is infinite. So to say that there is only one path leading to Him seems to be a dogmatic position. As He is

infinite, there must be an infinite number of ways to get to Him.

However, this analogy is flawed. Rome is made of the five material elements of earth, water, fire, air and sky. It is nothing more than a lump of matter. In the same way, the gross body of the human being is composed of these five elements and the subtle body, of mind, intelligence and perverted ego is also material. But the real self, as stated above, is the outcome of the para potency of the Supreme Lord Sri Krsna. As long as the soul, the spiritual spark, resides in this world, it can dominate matter for it is superior to it. So a person can come to Rome in hundreds of ways because there is a spiritual spark inside the body. Even dogs can come, or ants because a spiritual spark is similarly present in those bodies. But Bhagavan, God, is not a lump of matter to be dominated. He is transcendental and we can not dominate Him. We cannot get to Krsna without His grace.

In the scripture Srimad Bhagavatam (1.2.11), it is mentioned:

vadanti tat tattva-vidas

tattvam yaj jnanam advayam

brahmeti paramatmeti

bhagavan iti sabdyate

"Tat means ‘it,' the transcendental, ultimate reality. This absolute, undivided knowledge is referred to by different words, brahman, paramatma, or bhagavan. Jnanis or knowledge seekers see the absolute in its brahman or all-pervading aspect of the absolute. Yogis see it as paramatma, the Supersoul present in every living being. And the devotees or bhaktas see it as bhagavan."

Bhagavan is the all-comprehensive idea. Bhagavan means one who possesses all kinds of opulences, namely wealth, power, fame, beauty, strength and renunciation. These are the six main opulences, but in reality they exist in infinite variety. You will not find an equivalent word for bhagavan in any other religion to describe the Lord in His fullness. Bhagavan is greatest of the great, the smallest of the small, and everything in between.

Bhagavan takes many different forms, of which the sweetest is that of Vrajendranandana Krsna, the transcendental cowherd boy of Vraja. We can experience all varieties of bliss or ananda by worshipping Sri Krsna, but without His will nobody can see Him. We are not even able to see the

president of a country without his permission, so what makes us think that we can see Bhagavan at our whim? It is faulty reasoning to think that we can see Him by any path of our choosing. If I can see a person by my own capacity, then he becomes the object of my experience and, in that way, subordinate to me. Likewise, if anybody sees me by his own capacity, I become subordinate to him.

Without the will of the Supreme Lord nobody can see Him, and to fulfill that will is called bhakti. If you want to serve somebody, what must you do? You have to satisfy him, and that means you have to act according to his will. Similarly, if we want to attain the Supreme Lord, we have to act according to His will. Why would God come to someone who has no desire to see Him? On the other hand, if God is compelled to come, He loses His position as God. Karmis desire material benefit in this life and the next. They don't want Krsna, so why should He come to them? Jnanis desire emancipation. They make no effort for the satisfaction of Krsna, so why should He come to them? We can only get Krsna through bhakti, exclusive devotion.

Everything is done by the will of the Supreme Lord. Without His will, nobody can do anything. If a person says that he can do something independent of the Supreme Lord's will, he diminishes the Supreme Lord's absolute position. Even a leaf cannot move without the Lord's approval. Furthermore, whatever is done by the will of the Supreme Lord is for the eternal benefit of all. He is all-good, omnipotent and omniscient.

Sometimes we think that what is happening to us is not just, but we do not really know how we are responsible for our own destiny. We do not know what we have done in the past and what reactions are now bearing fruit. Can anybody claim to have knowledge of their past activities? We even have difficulty recalling events from even two days earlier in our present life, what to speak of those from ten years ago. Can you remember everything you have done from morning to night? We forget everything. Such is our situation. We neither know what we have done in the past nor what will take place in the future.

When we do not see how to reconcile these things, we become worried, even unbalanced. But self-realized souls always reconcile themselves with even adverse circumstances. They are therefore always calm and serene. We, on the other hand, lack the proper vision and knowledge and cannot recognize

the Lord's will.

Now one may ask, if even a leaf cannot move without the will of God, then it seems we do not have true free will. And what is the purpose of our lives if we have no free will? The answer is that living beings possess consciousness, which intrinsically means they have the power of thought, feeling and can exercise their will. But though the conscious unit has independence of thought, it is only a relative independence. There are many people who want to become a movie star or a president but are unable to fulfill their desire. One person who wants and needs to become president may attain his goal, but most will not. Our independence is thus relative.

Not all of our wishes come true. God controls all affairs, but He does not interfere in the relative independence of the jiva, the individual souls. He can interfere if He wishes, for He is omnipotent. But if He did so, then the individual consciousness would become inert; it would become matter. The independent consciousness would be destroyed. So the Lord Himself appears and tries to persuade the souls who are averse to Him to accept His teachings willingly. He does not want to force them to accept devotion. He could do so, but if He did, then the individual consciousness

would be destroyed. What would be the benefit of that? Consciousness is a great wealth, so, while still maintaining the jivas' relative independence, the Lord appears here in this world or He sends His own associates to make the jivas understand that they should willingly submit to Him.

Once, there was a magician. A friend told him that he was experience marital difficulties. He said, "I have everything I need, but my wife is not congenial. She is always doing something to displease me, so I am not happy. How can I control her? You are a magician. Can't you help me? You must know a spell or something." The magician gave him a magic wand and said, "Your wife will obey you, whatever you command."

The man went back to his house with the wand and ordered his wife, "Come here!" and his wife came. "Go there!" he said, and his wife went. "Sit here!" he commanded, and his wife sat down. But after doing this for some time, he realized he was still not happy. Why? Because his wife had become like a dog! He realized that for them to have a joyful relationship, she must have her independence, the ability to think independently. Only if she served willingly could there be happiness. If consciousness is destroy ed, there can be no happiness. In the same way, God is not so ignorant that

He chooses to suppress the relative independence of the jivas. He retains it and His counterpart, Gurudeva, does the same. But they make the jivas understand that they are the eternal servants of the Supreme Lord and that by serving Him they will become happy. They try to change the jivas' mentality by showing them their own ideal character and example, and by explaining to and inspiring them.

God does not want to destroy the relative independence of His minute particles. With whom will He enjoy His pastimes? In order for service to exist, there must be both a servitor and a served. Only then does prema or divine love become a possibility. There can be no such love where there is only one person. The jivas who are now here in this material world have forgotten Krsna, but ultimately, when they experience the awakening of the eternal nature of the self, they will cry for the Lord with great earnest ness and perturbation. And God will taste and relish their emotion. Why should we deprive God of that pleasure?

My Guru Maharaja once went to a place where there was a huge gathering. Everyone of all religions was welcome and so it was that half of the

participants were Muslim and half were Hindus. One Muslim from the audience asked Maharaja a question. "Swamiji, have you seen the atma and paramatma, the soul and the Supersoul? Can anybody say he has seen them? think no one has ever seen the atma and paramatma and that you are deceiving the world by speaking of them." Both the organizers of the meeting and the people in the audience were displeased with this challenger, but Guru Maharaja answered him respectfully. He said, "You are obviously a learned person. May I ask you a question? What is the name of the book you are holding?" The man stated the name of the book. Guru Maharaja replied, "I cannot see it. I cannot see the name of the book. You are deceiving me." Other Muslims came there and looked at the book's cover and confirmed the first man's statement. "Swamiji, this man has told you the book's right name."

Again Guru Maharaja continued: "I have my eyes and my eyesight is good. Yet I do not see what you say you do. You are collectively deceiving me. To me, it looks as though a crow stepped in ink and then walked on paper to make all those marks. I see nothing but crow's footprints."

Hearing this, the Muslim was enraged, "Swamiji, do you not know Urdu?"

"No, I do not."

The Muslim replied, "Then how can you expect to understand? You have to go through the alphabet and then you will be able to read it and understand. You have to earn the ability!"

Then Guru Maharaja said, "You have given the answer to your own question. We have many kinds of knowledge. We may easily learn other languages, but we do not have the qualifications to know atma and paramatma. We shall be able to see them when we acquire the necessary qualifications. Until we do so, we shall not be able to understand. I see the footprints of a crow, but other people see form and meaning in those footprints, because they have knowledge of the Urdu language behind their sight. If I have no kn owledge of Urdu, I cannot see what you do. Once I have that knowledge I too will be able to see. In the same way, special eligibility is necessary to see the soul. You have to go to those who have realized this and ask them to help you understand."

When one is enlightened with the knowledge by which ignorance is destroyed, then that knowledge reveals everything just as the sun lights up everything in the daytime. This sort of knowledge is self-effulgent. You

cannot see the sun at night because it is self-luminous; it cannot be seen with the help of other lights. When the sun rises and its light pours into your eyes, you can see the sun, you can see yourself, and you can see all the things of the world in their proper perspective.

In the same way when the self-luminous, self-effulgent Supreme Lord descends to a completely surrendered soul, then this soul will see his own self, he will see the other real selves of this world and all other things in their true perspective. All ignorance will be removed and everything will be illuminated by knowledge. But in order for this to happen, we will have to surrender to Him and take the help of the guru in every respect. We take the help of gurus, teachers, for even material knowledge, so why s hould it be different for the acquirement of spiritual knowledge? We have to go to a realized soul and take his instruction; then God will reveal Himself. We cannot know Him through our own ingenuity, nor with a challenging mood. God is an unchallengeable truth. He reveals Himself only to a completely surrendered soul.

The mind is the cause of bondage and the mind is also the cause of

emancipation. This is stated by Kapila Bhagavan in the third canto of the sacred scripture, Srimad Bhagavatam. Kapila Bhagavan was an incarnation of the Supreme Lord Himself who appeared as the son of Kardama Muni and Devahuti. One day Mother Devahuti asked her son, "How can a conditioned soul be rescued from the clutches of maya, from all sorts of desires of this world? How can we rescue ourselves from the bondage of maya?" To this Kapila Bhagavan replied:

cetah khalv asya bandhaya
muktaye catmano matam
gunesu saktam bandhaya
ratam va pumsi muktaye
(Srimad Bhagavatam 3.25.15)

"This mind is certainly the cause of bondage, and this mind is also the cause of emancipation. How? gunesu saktam bandhaya.When the mind of a person is attached to triguna, the three primary qualities of the external potency of the Supreme Lord (sattva-guna, rajo-guna and tamo-guna), then he is in bondage. When the mind of a person is attached to nirguna, the transcendental Supreme Person, Sri Hari, he will be delivered from the influence of maya and will get salvation."

What is triguna? The living beings are created by rajo-guna. My body is created by rajo-guna, it is maintained by sattva-guna, and it perishes by tamo-guna. By tamo-guna the living being dies. Our body is thus triguna, because it is born, remains for some time, and then perishes. Our body is triguna in concrete form, so someone who always thinks about his body, its necessities and its beautification, is in bondage. Such a persons only see the tabernacle, the outside covering of the soul, and never the real self.

Take the example of a magnet and iron. What is the nature of a magnet? The nature of a magnet is to attract iron whenever it comes near to it. And the nature of iron is that whenever it comes near a magnet, it is attracted by it. But sometimes we see that both iron and a magnet are present, but the magnet does not seem to be attracting the iron, nor is the iron being attracted by the magnet. Why?

The Supreme Lord is attracting all. So his name is Krsna: one who attracts all and gives happiness to all. Krsna is supreme in all respects: He is the greatest of the greatest, brahman, the smallest of the smallest, paramatma. He is the all-attractive principle. Still someone might say, "Swamiji, you say Krsna attracts everyone, but He is not attracting me."

But I say, yes, he is also attracting you, but you cannot feel it. Why? The magnet and iron are both there, but they do not attract each other because rust is covering the iron. Similarly, rust is now covering your soul and for that reason you are not feeling His attraction. You have to remove that rust or dust from your heart. If you remove it, your natural function will be awakened.

Due to your aversion to the Supreme Lord Sri Krsna, you have been enveloped by His illusory energy and covered by the dirt of the world. You have to remove that dirt of ulterior desires. How can it be done? You have remain in the company of sadhus or saints. You have to attentively hear with firm faith from a suddha-bhakta, a pure devotee whose life is dedicated to Sri Krsna and not from a professional speaker. There are many persons who say many things without acting on them. No speaker can bring about any effect in a listener without engaging in practical action, that is, without living according to his own teachings.

So you have to go to someone who is practicing, an awakened soul. Such a person can awaken many sleeping souls. If everyone is sleeping, who will arise? There must be someone to awaken others -- an awakened soul. That awakened soul is the suddha-bhakta. You have to hear from him attentively.

The words that come from his mouth are a transcendental sound. You have to receive that sound through your ears and it will awaken the transcendental nature of your real self. That nature, love for Krsna, is present within you, but it is enveloped by the illusory energy and has to be awakened.

Does a diseased person possess the capacity to treat himself? When we are ill, we consult an expert, an eye specialist, ear specialist or heart specialist. We have to go to the doctor. The doctor may say, "Why have you come to me?" And we will answer, "Well, I do not have any knowledge of medicine. You can tell me what the cause of my disease is. Please examine me and tell me what is making me ill. Then prescribe medicine and the appropriate diet so that I may be cured."

If the doctor's diagnosis is correct and we follow his prescription of medication and diet, we will recover. As a diseased person I cannot treat myself. In the same way, all of us in this world are diseased, suffering from the threefold afflictions -- miseries arising from our own bodies and minds, those caused by other living beings in this world, and those caused by natural calamities such as earthquakes. We are traveling through cycles of birth and death. You see that many babies are born -- you were also born. You were once in your mother's womb like everyone else. And, like

everyone else, one day you will also have to die. You have seen the types of affliction people are troubled by near the time of death -- tremendous suffering -- and your time of death is nearing.

As long as we live in this world, the threefold afflictions will exist. No happiness is permanent. The wheel of happiness and distress is always revolving. Sometimes you will enjoy material pleasures, then again you suffer. Suffering and pleasure follow each other regularly. When people desire for deliverance from these three-fold afflictions caused by the illusory energy of the Supreme Lord, they begin to inquire into their cause and search for a bona fide guru.

To take complete shelter of Krsna is called saranagati. It is related in the Mahabharata, that when Duhsasana wanted to denude Draupadi in front of the kings and others such as Drona and Bhima, Draupadi cried out Krsna's name, calling to Him to rescue her. Krsna did save her, but not immediately. Because He came to the rescue a little late, Draupadi complained to Him. She said, "Thank You very much for saving me, but You could surely have come a little earlier. Why did You wait so long? What is the reason You delayed?"

Krsna replied: "You called out My name, I admit. But those words were not enough. You did not take shelter of Me. At first you took shelter of Bhima and Arjuna thinking that they would come and kill Duhsasana and protect you. Why should I come if you think that Bhima and Arjuna can protect you? You uttered My name, but you did not take My shelter. You took shelter of Bhima and Arjuna."

We cannot deceive Bhagavan. It is not possible. He is residing within us and sees everything.

Krsna: "Is it not true that you took shelter of Bhima and Arjuna?"

Draupadi: "Yes."

Krsna: "Then why should I have come?"

Draupadi: "Well, You should have come after that."

Krsna: "After that you took shelter of Drona, the teacher of the Kauravas and Pandavas. If Drona had intervened, no one would have had the power to stop him. So why should I come if Drona could come and rescue you? Am I not correct?"

Draupadi: "Yes, You are correct."

Krsna: "After that you took shelter of grandfather Bhisma, the formidable warrior, and most respected member of all the court. If he had intervened,

no one could have done anything... You took shelter of him. Why should I come if Bhisma could rescue you? You did not take shelter of Me. Actually, you were crying, ‘Krsna, Krsna,' but you had not taken shelter of Me, but of those whom you could see before you. Why then should I have come? I thought, Let them protect you.

"After that, you took shelter of Dhrtarastra, and after that, all the other kings. After all that, you tried to rescue yourself by hold tightly onto your cloth -- with one hand up you were trying to hold onto your cloth. But I do not appear where saranagati is only partial. I do not descend in such circumstances. When, you raised both your hands and called to Me, taking absolute shelter of Me, then I came immediately."

Unless we take absolute shelter, we cannot have any kind of remedy for our miseries. As long as we do not submit to the Supreme Lord Krsna sincerely, completely, we shall have to suffer the distress of this world. We are trying to earn money and maintain our worldly relations so that we might have happiness. Yet we can see the consequences of our attachment to non-eternal things -- severe miseries. Even so, due to our ignorance, our misconception of self, we keep on trying for this ephemeral happiness. We have lost our money and we have lost our near and dear ones, but again we

keep trying to get those things back again. If no human being is available, we acquire a dog, a cat, a parrot or whatever, and become attached to that. Again and again we try for the non-eternal because the root cause of our affliction is not eliminated. This root cause is our misconception of self and the ignorance of thinking that by getting material benefits we will be truly benefited. As long as we do not surrender to the Lord, we will never be able to attain the ultimate goal of life. The Kathopanisad (2.23) mentions:

nayam atma pravacanena labhyo
na medhaya na bahuna srutena
yam evaisa vrnute tena labhyas
tasyaisa atma vivrnute tanum svam

"God cannot be attained and realized by delivering lectures, by intellect, or by great erudition. The Supreme Lord will reveal His own eternal form only to a surrendered soul."

And at the end of the Bhagavad-gita (18.65-66) Krsna has given His highest instruction to all conditioned souls of the world for their eternal welfare:

man-mana bhava mad-bhakto
mad-yaji mam namaskuru
mam evaisyasi satyam te
pratijane priyo 'si me

"Devote your mind to Me. If it is difficult to devote your mind to Me, serve Me; engage your senses in My service. If this is also not possible, worship Me. If even that is not possible, take absolute shelter of Me. I promise you that you will surely get Me."

sarva-dharman parityajya
mam ekam saranam vraja
aham tvam sarva-papebhyo
moksayisyami ma sucah

"Relinquish all My previous spiritual instructions about dharma (the relative social-religious duties enjoined by the Vedas) and take absolute shelter of Me."

The Bhagavad-gita ends with saranagati, and that is where the Srimad

Bhagavatam begins. Without saranagati we cannot enter into the spiritual realm. So first we have to take shelter of Krsna. When one becomes a person who is of Krsna and does only things for the satisfaction of Krsna, then that is called bhakti. Hearing about His name, form, attributes and pastimes is completely transcendental. But first we have to take shelter of Sri Krsna. We have to know that "I am of Krsna." That knowledge will be given by a realized soul, a suddha-bhakta, or sad-guru. For that reason we have to go to a realized soul who is established in the eternal nature of the soul. He knows that he belongs to Krsna, and he is always serving Krsna. If we submissively approach such realized souls, inquire humbly from them and serve them, then they can awaken the nature of our eternal self. For that reason saranagati is necessary. And we can get actual saranagati by submitting to a saranagata-bhakta.

Saranagati has six aspects that are described as follows:

anukulasya sankalpah pratikulyasya varjanam
raksisyatiti visvaso goptrtve varanam tatha
atma-niksepa-karpanye sad-vidha saranagatih

"We should accept whatever is congenial for the service of Krsna. We should

give up what is unfavorable. He is the only protector, and nobody else can protect me. And He is the only sustainer and maintainer. We should take absolute shelter of Him. We should be humble and give up our mundane material ego. These are the six divisions of saranagati."

Bhaktivinoda Thakur ends his song about surrender, with the words, rupa sanatana-pade dante tara kori, bhaktivinoda pore duhun pada dhori.: "With straw between my teeth I fall down at the feet of Sri Sri Rupa and Sanatana." The point is that we have to go to a suddha bhakta, a realized soul. He will impart knowledge of saranagati to us. If we do not submit to him, the process of surrender will never become manifest in us.

What then should we pray to Krsna for? We should pray to Krsna for the service of His lotus feet and that of His devotees. That is the highest prospect. "Please, kindly bless me so that I can get the association of Your true devotee. If I get the association of Your true devotee, I shall get You. Please give me this sort of blessing. Unless and until I get the dust of the lotus feet of a suddha bhakta, I will never develop my love for Krsna." That should be our prayer.

Abhidheya

Why should we try to get Krsna? Because if we can get the complete reality, we can get everything. By getting Whom, we get all; by knowing Whom, we know all -- that is Krsna. We will have no want of anything else. All our desires will be fulfilled and all our problems solved. So how can we get Krsna? This is described by the abhidheya of bhakti, the practice of devotion.

One of Krsna's unlimited names is Hrsikesa. That means He is the enjoyer of all sense organs and their objects. Now if we do not engage our senses in the transcendental service of Sri Krsna, then unholy things will enter our minds through those senses. That is why we have to stop them from engaging in material matters, so that mundane thoughts will not come into our minds. This can only be achieved by using our senses for the pleasure of the Lord under the guidance of a realized soul. Then, when Krsna is sa tisfied, He can give us the opportunity to see Him. That is called bhakti. This is the abhidheya, the method of spiritual practice as propagated by

Caitanya Mahaprabhu and substantiated by the Vedas. Only by loving another person can we increase our love for him or her. Similarly, if we want to increase our love for Krsna, we have to practice loving Him.

Those who say that Ultimate Reality has no form and potencies are misguiding the whole world. He may not have a material form, but He does have one that is transcendental. If there is no form in the cause, then there can be no form in the effect either. God has infinite form and He can also take initiative. We can never find happiness independent of Him, but if we simply take shelter of Him, all our problems will be solved in a moment.

What is the definition of bhakti? The following definition has been given in the scripture Narada Pancaratra:

sarvopadhi-vinirmuktam
tat-paratvena nirmalam
hrsikena hrsikesa-
sevanam bhaktir ucyate

The word upadhi refers to the identities a person has acquired as a result

of his previous actions. For example, if someone has a university degree, this will be the result of his own previous actions. Someone may think he has become an advocate, or a doctor, but these are external identifications. The real self is something different. Because of our previous actions we were born in different castes and different countries. But our castes and nationalities are all upadhis. If we engage in further actions on the basis of this ego, it will be karma, material activities for which we will get an opposite reaction, and not bhakti;.

What is karma and what is bhakti? It is very difficult to differentiate one from the other. Simply stated, whenever we do anything with a sense of material ego, the results go to the material ego. When we take the merits of our actions for our own self, it is called karma -- it is not bhakti. The results of all our actions should go to the Supreme Lord, not to our own pocket. Someone may work throughout the day and night inciting an observer to say, "This person is a very good servitor." But if he is doing this work to satisfy his own material ego, then it is not bhakti. For it is said, "sarvopadhi-vinirmuktam." We should be completely free from all kinds of material identification. Vinirmuktam means there should not be even a scent of material ego. If there is even a touch of material ego, there is no question of bhakti -- it will be karma.

"I am from India, I am of such and such caste" -- these are examples of material ego. There is no goodness in this world; all is amangala, unholy. We become unholy when we think we are of this world. Anything done with the unholy ego is unholy. So we should have no connection with this world by completely freeing ourselves of this ego. This condition is very difficult to achieve.

However, just to be free from ego is not enough. Jnanis, or knowledge-seekers also want to give up the ego. They want emancipation; they want to merge themselves with brahman, the impersonal formless aspect of God. But we cannot perform bhakti just by divesting ourselves of the worldly material ego. "Tat-paratvena nirmalam": We should give ourselves to Him. We have to sincerely feel that we belong to Krsna and the guru in our hearts, not just mouth the words. Then we shall become sanctified, nirmalam. This is confirmed by another definition of bhakti that is given in Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu (1.1.11):

anyabhilasita-sunyam
jnana-karmady-anavrtam
anukulyena krsnanu-

silanam bhaktir uttama

"This is the best devotion, or uttama bhakti:: One should be free of non-devotional desires of any kind. All kinds of sin should be removed from the heart. We should not be entangled with jnana and karma, knowledge aimed at liberation and reward-seeking activity. This is not helpful for getting pure devotion. And we should submit to a true devotee. anakulyena krsnanusilanam -- we have to act only for the satisfaction of Krsna."

This is the general meaning of the verse, but its real significance is to point us in the direction of Radharani, the most perfect form of Krsna's potency. She is the highest devotee, and we have to take shelter of Her and Her extensions, the sakhis and manjaris (girlfriends and maidservants). When, like them, we have given ourselves completely to Krsna, then whatever we do after that will be devotion.

The different devotional practices, or sadhanas, have been explained in Srimad Bhagavatam. Now there are two general kinds of sadhana according to which we can practice bhakti: vaidhi bhakti and raganuga bhakti. Vidhi means rule or regulation. For those who have no natural love for Sri

Krsna, vaidhi bhakti is appropriate. There are many conditioned souls who have no taste for worshiping Krsna, because they have no feeling of relationship with Him. When one has a relationship with somebody, there is an automatic impetus to serve or love that person. Parents do not need to be taught to love their children. The tendency is there due to their natural relationship. However, very few of us have any feeling of relation with the Supreme Lord, so there are vidhis, rules and regulations. We are told : "He is the Supreme Lord. He is the Creator and Sustainer. It is our duty to worship Him." Most of us have no spontaneous liking for worship, but will practice devotion because it is the injunction of the scriptures. Thus for ordinary aspirants, vaidhi bhakti is applicable.

Raganuga means spontaneous attraction. Those devotees whose attraction to Krsna is inborn are called ragatmika-bhaktas. They are the original associates of Lord Krsna. No conditioned soul can become ragatmika. But as conditioned souls we can have a relation with raganuga bhakti. Raganuga-bhaktas also have spontaneous love for Krsna, but they have developed it through sadhana. If we can associate with them, then we might automatically develop a spontaneous love for Krsna that is very intense. But such cases are exceptional.

At present we worship the deities of Radha and Krsna on the altar according to many rules and regulations, our love being restricted by the injunctions of the scriptures. In fact, however, Radha and Krsna are the only possible objects of spontaneous love. The Vrajavasis, the inhabitants of Krsna's transcendental realm Vrndavana think that Krsna is subservient to them. And the highest form of spontaneous devotion is found in Krsna's absolute counterpart, Srimati Radharani and her personal associates, the gopis. If we take the mantra from the subordinates of Radharani, the sakhis and manjaris -- then this mantra will take us to Radha and Krsna in their mood of service. At present, however, we have just started sadhana and will not have this realization. We are thus eligible to perform vaidhi bhakti, but ultimately, if we go on practicing, then the desire to serve Radha and Krsna intimately will rise up automatically from the core of our heart. The raganuga-bhaktas also follow the angas or limbs of vaidhi bhakti, but with intense love. If we practice sincerely, eventually such intense desire to serve will spontaneously arise from within. We have to be patient, and for now we have to continue practicing according to the guidelines of vaidhi bhakti.

Vaidhi bhakti consists of sixty-four principal limbs of devotion. Of these, nine are specified as essential in Srimad Bhagavatam (7.5.23-24).

sravanam kirtanam visnoh

smaranam pada-sevanam

arcanam vandanam dasyam

sakhyam atma-nivedanam

We have to hear about Krsna. And, after hearing, we have to chant about Krsna. We have to know about His transcendental name, form, qualities and pastimes. After we know about these we can speak about them. But first we have to go to those who have received this knowledge through the preceptorial channel. By listening to them, those transcendental sounds will come through our ears and touch and awaken our real self. That is the only way. We have to hear, sravana, from an awakened soul and not from a professional platform speakers. After hearing we have to chant, kirtana. And there are other forms of sadhana, like smarana, or remembrance. A devotee engages all his senses in the service of Sri Krsna.

sravanadi-kriya tara svarupa-laksana

tatastha-laksane upajaya prema-dhana

(Caitanya Caritamrta, Madhya, 22.107)

Svarupa-laksana means the original characteristic of a suddha-bhakta. A pure devotee will always speak about Krsna and always hear about Krsna. As fish and other aquatic animals cannot survive without water, suddha-bhaktas cannot survive without speaking about Krsna, hearing about Krsna. That is their life. When we engage in sravanam and kirtanam with a suddha-bhakta, the concomitant result will be love for Krsna. This love is innate in the nature of every living being. We cannot awaken it through penance and austerities, but this eternal nature of the self will automatically be awakened if we keep the association of suddha-bhaktas.

Caitanya Mahaprabhu in turn selected five principal forms of devotion: bhagavata-sravana, mathura-vasa, sri-murti-sevana, sadhu-sanga, and nama-kirtana. We should listen (sravana) to the transcendental narrations about the Lord as found in Srimad Bhagavatam. We should hear these narrations from suddha bhaktas and in that way have association with them, sadhu-sanga. And we should stay (vasa) in a holy place like Mathura or Vrndavana where Krsna performed His earthly pastimes. We have to stay in the transcendental realm. A place where devotees sing the glories of

Supreme Lord is also considered as a transcendental realm. And we should worship (sevana) Sri Krsna in His Form as a murti (deity) on the altar with firm faith. Among these principal forms of devotion, however the foremost emphasis is given to nama-kirtana. Chanting the holy names of Krsna without offences quickly removes all afflictions and bestows the ultimate goal of life, Krsna prema. We will now discuss these five principal forms of devotion in more detail.

Caitanya Mahaprabhu propagated Divine Love based on the teachings of the Vedas and Srimad Bhagavatam. Caitanya Mahaprabhu was an erudite scholar. According to Sri Caitanya, the Srimad Bhagavatam is the quintessence of all scriptures. Vyasadeva, the compiler of the Vedas, stated in the Garuda Purana that the significance of the Vedas has been retained and enhanced in Srimad Bhagavatam.

How can we know about Krsna? We can only know about Him through the ears and not through the eyes. We can hear about the real form of Krsna from the sadhus, but unfortunately we think we have no time for hearing about the Lord. The noble king Pariksit Maharaja heard from the sage Sukadeva Gosvami continuously for seven days without taking any food, without sleeping, going to bed, or even drinking water. Then he was able to attain

the ultimate goal of life. But if we have no time to hear, how can we acquire knowledge about the ultimate goal? Even if you want to get material knowledge, you have to go to the appropriate teachers and hear from them. Likewise, there is no way to gain transcendental knowledge other than the ear. Of all our senses, it is the nearest to the soul.

It is said in the scriptures that bhakti can be achieved by the association of a bona fide suddha-bhakta, a pure devotee. And who will get the association of a suddha- bhakta? Those who have knowingly or unknowingly served Sri Krsna accumulate a number of impressions in their psyche. These impressions develop into sraddha, faith, and this faith in turn creates the impetus to go to a suddha-bhakta to hear about the Supreme Lord. These previous impressions, which we call sukrti, are the original cause of devotion. They are eternal and not material good deeds.

Now a suddha-bhakta cannot have material desires. But for argument's sake, if any suddha-bhakta wants and tries to get any of the temporary things of this world, God will put some obstacle in his way. If by mistake or ignorance a pure devotee desires to attain the heavenly planets or any of the things connected to the material realm, God will put obstacles in his path. Does this mean that God is not gracious to such a devotee? No, that

is His compassion, His kindness, because He knows that the wealth of this world is poison to His devotee. The devotee has no real need for it. If we want to enjoy, we must come into contact with the temporary things of this world. But we cannot enjoy the Supreme Lord; we cannot enjoy the guru, or Bhagavan. We can only enjoy non-eternal things. When God sees his devotee is going to pursue non-eternal things, seeking the poisonous wealth of this world with the spirit of enjoying, He will not allow him to do so.
Only those who have no ulterior motives can understand this. They can understand the compassion of the suddha-bhakta, the pure devotee, and Supreme Lord. But those who have got ulterior motives think that they have been blessed when the Supreme Lord or Gurudeva fulfills their base desires. Only those who have no other desire can understand the actual mercy of Bhagavan.

Caitanya Mahaprabhu has taught us in His Siksastakam:

na dhanam na janam na sundarim
kavitam va jagadisa kamaye
mama janmani janmanisvare
bhavatad bhaktir ahaituki tvayi

"I do not want wealth. I do not want followers or salvation, and I don't want material knowledge. Please give me exclusive devotion to Your lotus feet. I want nothing else."

If we want anything else besides this, repentance will automatically follow. When we get the association of the sadhus, real sadhus, we will be rescued from this world, its births and deaths and its threefold afflictions. Krsna sends His own person to rescue us.

When we are attached to Sri Krsna, we will be emancipated, delivered from maya. But Krsna does not talk to us; His murti stands silently on the altar. Out of many, many devotees, He might have spoken to somebody, but He does not speak to me. On the other hand, I know my body is perishable. I also know that other bodies are perishable, transitory, that they will not remain. Even so, in spite of knowing that they are temporary, I can exchange thoughts with them. Because we can speak and exchange thoughts with the living beings of this world, we become attached to them and our relations with them. But Krsna is only standing there silently, so how can we get attachment for Him? This is our problem.

Kapila Bhagavan shows us the solution. The murti of the Supreme Lord may

not be speaking to you, but you can see the suddha-bhaktas, the sadhus (saints); you can speak to them and exchange thoughts with them.

prasangam ajaram pasam
atmanah kavayo viduh
sa eva sadhusu krto
moksa-dvaram apavrtam

(Srimad Bhagavatam 3.25.20)

If you have the association of a suddha-bhakta, a pure devotee, then you will be rescued. The suddha-bhakta is always moving in this world.

Now there are six ways of associating with sadhus. This has been stated by Rupa Gosvami in his Upadesamrta:

dadati pratigrhnati
guhyam akhyati prcchati
bhunkte bhojayate caiva
sad-vidham priti-laksanam

When we love somebody, what do we do? We give something that is dear to us and we accept that which is offered to us in return. It is a give and take. We open our hearts to that person, and we listen to his heartfelt words. We serve him, feeding him with varieties of good food, and we accept the same in return. This is the way we associate with people in friendship. Now if we relate in this way with people who are in bondage, we will become attached to worldly things. But if we engage in such exchanges with sadhus it will lead to love for Krsna. If we give the sadhu something of this world, he accepts it and then engages it in the service of Sri Krsna. Then, after sanctifying it in this way, he gives it back to us as prasada, divine remnants.

I was told by my spiritual master that if you use donations given for another purpose for yourself, you are taking poison. You should give everything to guru and Vaisnava and that poison will be destroyed by them. They have this power because they have been reinstated in their real selves. We do not that everything belongs to Krsna, but they do.

Caitanya Mahaprabhu directed Tapan Misra to give Sanatana Gosvami a cloth. Sanatana Gosvami told the Lord that he would not accept a new cloth, but

wanted one that had previously been worn by a devotee so that it would be prasada.

Next we should open our hearts to the devotee -- "guhyam akhyati prcchati.." If we do not open our hearts, then the sadhu will not open his either; he will not speak about the esoteric aspects of bhajana or spiritual practice. He will only speak openly when he has examined a person and found him to be fit. We should therefore not be afraid to speak openly of our frailties. In this way, we will develop a heart-to-heart relation with the sadhu.

Next, we should feed the sadhu with great devotion and love. The suddha-bhakta sees that Krsna is the only enjoyer and that all things belong to Him, and so he offers them to the service of Krsna, and after making the offering he will give you prasada. If you take the prasada with the knowledge that you are taking the Sri Krsna's remnants, you will be rescued from the clutches of maya.

This is the way that we should associate with sadhus. If we engage in such exchanges with the conditioned souls, the sleeping jivas of the world, we will become attached to them. So it is far more beneficial to cultivate

such relations with a sadhu. But simply remaining near the body of a sadhu is not associating with him. Bugs and mosquitoes may come into close contact with the sadhu, but what are they doing? They are sucking his blood. To exploit the sadhu in such a way is not associating with him. You have to follow the mentality of the sadhu, the thoughts of the sadhu. The sadhu thinks about the service of Krsna and, if we follow that, then we can associate with him even when we are a thousand miles away. On the other hand, without that consciousness, we may be physically very close to him, even sleep in the same bed, but never gain any sadhu-sanga. The sadhu is for the service of Radha-Krsna; we have to follow this idea of his. Actual association means remaining in contact with the sadhu in a serving mood.

Then Mother Devahuti asked, "You have advised us to associate with the sadhu. But who is sadhu? Please describe the qualities by which we can recognize a sadhu." Kapila Bhagavan replied that sadhus have two kinds of qualities: the svarupa-laksana and tatastha-laksana. Svarupa means original or actual; so the svarupa-laksana refers to the quality without which no person can become a real sadhu. The real sign of the sadhu is that he does everything only for the satisfaction of the Lord. When this characteristic of the devotee is present, then the other qualities, the

tatastha-laksana, will follow. What are these secondary characteristics? Kapila says:

titiksavah karunikah
suhrdah sarva-dehinam
ajata-satravah santah
sadhavah sadhu-bhusanah

(Srimad Bhagavatam 3.25.21)

Titiksavah. A sadhu will be tolerant and forgiving. Why? They have no desire except the service of Sri Krsna. If you have any other desire besides this service you cannot be tolerant. This is the meaning of the third verse of Caitanya Mahaprabhu's Siksastakam:

trnad api sunicena
taror api sahisnuna
amanina manadena
kirtaniyah sada harih

"We should be more humble than a blade of grass, more tolerant than a tree; we should give respect to all and not want any respect from others."

This is the general meaning of this verse. Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Gosvami Thakur pointed out that those who have a misconception of self can never become more humble than a blade of grass; they can never do Hari-kirtana and perform bhakti-yoga. One who has a misconception of self will have bodily desires. He will have the desire for kanaka, kamini and pratistha -- the desire for wealth, the attraction for sex, and the greed for respect, name and fame. When an obstacle to fulfilling his desires arises, he will be enraged. He will become unbalanced and intolerant. Outwardly he may show respect and tolerance, but it will be hypocritical. To become a sadhu is not so easy. A person with these qualities is rarely to be found.

Karunikah. The sadhus will be gracious, they will have compassion for all the jivas of this world. The sadhu sees Krsna and that all is connected with Krsna, so he naturally loves all living beings of the world equally. According to their qualifications, sadhus may understand the behavior of guru and Vaisnava in somewhat different ways, but their love is equal for all. They know the root cause of our affliction is forgetfulness of our

relation with the Supreme Lord Sri Krsna.

We are always sleeping -- the nature of the body is that it is sleeping -- but we should fight against this lethargy, otherwise we cannot worship Krsna properly. We may sleep all day and all night, but still we are drowsy. But look at the way the Gosvamis performed bhajana. They knew that we may leave this body at any moment and so they asked themselves, "Why we should spoil our time?" Worship of Krsna means to hear about Krsna. Hearing about Krsna is bhakti, speaking about Krsna is bhakti. This is our life. We should not spoil our time but should hear such things repeatedly.

Sometimes we say, "Oh I have already heard all these things." In fact we have not really heard. Caitanya Mahaprabhu had heard the story of Prahlada Maharaja a hundred times and still requested His associates to speak about him. Such accounts are not composed of material sound; they cannot become stale. You can have the taste of spiritual ambrosia at every moment by listening to them. So we have to give up all our nescience and start Krsna bhajana without a moment's delay.

karau harer mandira-marjanadisu
srutim cakaracyuta-sat-kathodaye

(Srimad Bhagavatam, 9.4.18)

A devotee engages his ears in hearing about the glories of Krsna from a suddha-bhakta. A suddha-bhakta who has dedicated his life for the service of Sri Krsna can speak about the glories of Sri Krsna. This is sat-katha. Those who are platform speakers have some other motive. When they speak about Krsna, their aim is to get some money, name and fame, and so on. That is not Hari-katha. Hari-katha can only be spoken by a bonafide sadhu.

mukunda-lingalaya darsane drsau
tad-bhrtya-gatra-sparse 'nga-sangamam
ghranam ca tat-pada-saroja-saurabhe
srimat-tulasya rasanam tad-arpite

(Srimad Bhagavatam, 9.4.19)

"Mukunda-lingalaya darsane drsau. The sadhu engages his eyes in seeing the temple where the deities are worshiped and for the darsana of the deity. He engages his body in touching the Lord's deity form so that

transcendental devotion may enter into him. If he finds a nice fragrant flower, he does not smell it but first offers it to the Supreme Lord, and afterwards he takes it as prasada. Padau hareh ksetra-padanusarpane. The sadhu engages his feet and legs for the service of Sri Krsna by circumambulating the transcendental realm of the Supreme Lord and for bringing the articles for puja. In this way we should engage all our senses in the service of Sri Krsna."

We can understand according to our individual capacity. A suddha-bhakta sees Krsna directly; he speaks with Krsna. Krsna also moves with him, but not with us because we have got some sort of connection with this body, and bodily attachment is there. We cannot see because our eyes are not pure. We need prema-netra , devotional eyes that have been soothed with divine love. We can only see Krsna with devotional eyes.

It is not so easy to have darsana of Krsna for we can only see with spiritual, devotional eyes. We have the enjoying spirit; we are filled with lust. When the enjoying spirit pushes us to satisfy our senses, we come into contact with finite things, matter. We have thus suffered in death's prison for millions of years. This is our inheritance. However, when the eyes are for Krsna only, then Krsna will appear. So the

suddha-bhaktas, uttama-bhaktas, the best devotees, see Krsna everywhere. And they only take prasada. They do not take what cannot be offered to Krsna. They always think about Krsna; pure devotees of the Lord have a liking for only remembrance and kirtana. Day and night, they will hear about Sri Krsna's transcendental name, form, attributes and pastimes from the lotus mouths of the devotees.

We should not see others' defects. If we want to rectify things, we should first see to our own defects. A real Vaisnava or devotee is like a swan, a hamsa. The hamsa has the capacity to take the milk out from a mixture of milk and water. Vaisnavas are paramahamsas. They see the good qualities in others and not the bad. All the sleeping conditioned jivas have both good and bad qualities. Only realized souls have no bad qualities. Even so, they see the good qualities of others and ignore the bad. We, the con ditioned jivas, see the bad qualities and ignore the good. This is one reason we are in bondage. We need some rectification if we are to awaken from our state of bondage. The guru and Vaisnava who have love for their disciples may sometimes correct them for their own good. They may control or chastise them, but that sort of chastisement or speaking of harsh words to the novice is not a reaction to the obstruction of their own ego desires or kama. The suddha-bhaktas have no kama, so if perchance they

should punish, they do so out of love.

Some people direct their anger or krodha to the sadhu, but we should not do this. To vilify a sadhu is a big offence and very detrimental to our spiritual welfare. To stop such offences, pure devotees may express anger, but this for the spiritual benefit of the person who is committing the offence and not for some personal egoistic purpose. Not everyone is entitled to show anger in this way. The suddha-bhaktas or sad-gurus, who have love for the jivas, are entitled to do so. They can punish for they can do real good for others. We need their grace. Without the grace of Hari we cannot get the sadhu, and without the grace of the sadhu we cannot get Hari. If you are very keen to get the service of Krsna, Krsna will come to you in the form of the sadhu. When you have the sincere desire to serve Krsna you will get the knowledge to recognize who is a real sadhu and who is not. God is within you and He will help you to find the sadhu. He will give you faith and the capacity to understand. A sincere soul will never be deceived.

In many cultures, time is divided into four periods: the ages of gold, silver, bronze and iron. In the Vedas these are called satya, treta, dvapara and kali, respectively. Others may attribute different lengths of

time to these ages, but the idea is the same: infinite time has been divided into four, recurring ages. As these ages pass we see a gradual deterioration of the human condition from happiness and innocence to sorrow and ignorance. It reaches its nadir in the present kali-yuga, the iron age. In this black age, persons will be mostly irreligious and therefore it is very difficult to find a bona fide guru. The Supreme Lord Sri Krsna saw the plight of humanity in this black age, so He took the complexion and mode of worship of Radharani and appeared as Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Radha is Krsna's absolute counterpart; She is His best devotee and He has taken Her attitude to become Krsna Caitanya.

Caitanya Mahaprabhu said that the root cause of our affliction is forgetfulness of our relation with the Supreme Lord. We have to remember Him; if we can remember Him, there will be no afflictions. How we can do this? Through meditation? In this kali-yuga the method of meditation will not be successful because the enslaved jivas' minds are restless. The mind is always jumping about like a monkey so how can we meditate? Nothing but worldly things will come to our mind. Simply by closing our eyes we are not meditating. We close our eyes and off we go to London. This is inevitable because the mind is like a storehouse of impressions that have entered it through the senses. When we try to meditate, these impressions

come back up to the surface again.

We are attached to worldly things and this is the source of our bondage. In order to become free from this bondage, we should offer the objects of our attachment to the service of Krsna. This is the only way we can transcend our worldly attachments. The purpose is to concentrate on the transcendental object of worship, Lord Krsna.

In the satya-yuga, meditation was possible. The people of this age had purity, compassion, and respect for truthfulness. But in the treta-yuga, these qualities diminished and the method of meditation on the Supreme Lord ceased to be possible. So the sages prescribed yajna, sacrifice. In the dvapara-yuga, however, people could not utter the mantras correctly so the sages and scriptures prescribed worship of the deity-form of the Lord. You have to engage all the senses to worship the deity. The goal is to dev elop concentration on the object of worship, and in order to do so you have to engage all your senses in the service of the deity. In the kali-yuga, however, we are so diseased that we cannot even perform proper puja. In this age, our physical and mental health is very fragile. We are all diseased and since a diseased person is prohibited from worship, how can we perform proper puja? So the Lord said, "You can perform Harinama, you

can chant the Holy Name. I shall appear in this world as Harinama and give all power to Harinama."

By chanting the Holy Name you can get the highest thing. In the kali-yuga, Truth means the Holy Name. The Holy Name is the Supreme Truth. Krsna appears in this kali-yuga as the Name. So take shelter of the Name. The Name and the Named are one. Chant the Holy Name in the company of a suddha-bhakta.

The Holy Name is not a material sound. You will find the thing referred to by a material sound is different from the sound itself. The word "water" refers to the substance water. The word "water" is different from this substance. Thus we cannot quench our thirst by simply uttering the word "water." By way of contrast, Krsna and the name of Krsna are one and the same.

Caitanya Mahaprabhu has written:

ceto-darpana marjanam bhava-maha-
davagni-nirvapanam
sreyah-kairava-candrika-vitaranam

vidya-vadhu-jivanam

anandambudhi-vardhanam prati-padam

purnamrtasvadanam

sarvatma-snapanam param vijayate

sri krsna-sankirtanam

Utter Krsna's name from the core of your heart -- Hare Krsna. You will get everything. Your mind will be sanctified. All difficulties will be removed by uttering His Name. This is the first attainment. Once all difficulties have been removed, you will no longer be confronted by the forest fire of material life. There is a forest fire throughout the whole world because everybody has a false ego and thinks he or she belongs to this world. But if we love Krsna, then we see that every living being is related to Krsna and we love them because of this relation. Parents need not be taught to love their children. They love them automatically because of their relation. So we have to take shelter of Sri Krsna.

In Goloka Vrndavana, everyone is drowned in the ananda. At every step they experience the sweetest ever-increasing ecstasy, because everybody's target is to satisfy Krsna. Their center is one. If you draw different circles with a single center, there will be no intersection. But if they

have different centers, the circles will intersect, and there will be clashes. As long as there are different groups and different centers, we cannot stop fighting in this world. This material forest fire can be extinguished by Harinama, by chanting the mahamantra:

hare krsna hare krsna, krsna krsna hare hare
hare rama hare rama, rama rama hare hare

We should chant the Holy Name without wanting anything other than the service of guru and Krsna. What is the meaning of Sri-Krsna-sankirtana? Sankirtana means to sing and chant about the transcendental glories, names, forms, attributes, and pastimes of Sri Krsna entirely, exhaustively, and fully. We have to perform sankirtana properly, avoiding the tenfold offences.

Ten main offences in the chanting of the Holy Name are listed in the Padma Purana. The principal offence is to disgrace the sadhus and to think of the guru as an ordinary human being. How can Sri Krsna tolerate it if we discredit or disparage those who are dear to Him? How can the Lord tolerate it if we commit offences to their lotus feet? If we commit offences to their lotus feet, than how can the Lord tolerate it? It is

the greatest offence, and we should take every step to avoid making it.

We should always analyze ourselves and our own defects for this will help us to rectify ourselves. The greatest drawback of the conditioned souls, the enslaved jivas, is that in themselves they only see good qualities while in others they only see defects. But we should not see the defects of the Vaisnavas and devotees even if they have some. We should rather look to our own defects while taking care to observe the qualities of others. Then we can make progress. The tendency to find fault leads us to commit offences to the Vaisnavas. This is why Caitanya Mahaprabhu has taught us the way to perform Sri Krsna sankirtana: We should be more humble than a blade of grass, more tolerant than a tree, give respect to all others, and not demand any respect for ourselves. If we chant the mahamantra with this attitude from the core of the heart, we will achieve our eternal welfare. Then we will get the knowledge that we are of Krsna and that we are His eternal servants.

hare krsna hare krsna, krsna krsna hare hare
hare rama hare rama, rama rama hare hare

We must cry to Radharani and Krsna from the core of our heart. If we do,

then Krsna will come to us immediately. He is within us, and He has given all power to His name. If we utter His name in consciousness of our relation to Him, we will be submerged in the ocean of ananda and Krsna prema. After that, whenever we utter the Name we will experience infinite, complete ambrosia at every step. Hare Krsna.

Prayojana: The fulfillment of devotion

What is the ultimate goal of life (prayojana) for all living beings in this world? The ultimate goal is divine love for Sri Krsna. We should speak on this subject throughout the yearnot just for half an hour. We should speak on this subject wherever we go.

Srinatha Cakravarti, a great Indian saint of Caitanya Mahaprabhu's school of thought, has given the substance of Caitanya Mahaprabhu's teachings in a Sanskrit verse:

aradhyo bhagavan vrajesa-tanayas
tad-dhama vrndavanam
ramya kacid upasana vraja-vadhu-

vargena ya kalpita

srimad-bhagavatam pramanam amalam

prema pumartho mahan

sri-caitanya-mahaprabhor matam idam

tatradaro nah parah

Who is the highest object of worship? Sri Krsna is. Here Caitanya Mahaprabhu is speaking about Vrajendra-nandana Krsna, the son of Nanda Maharaja, the king of Vraja. Vraja means "where the cows graze." Nanda Maharaja is the king (indra) of the cowherds (the gopas and gopis). The son of Nanda Maharaja, Nanda-nandana Sri Krsna, is the highest object of worship. Nanda-nandana means the "son of Nanda." Vrndavana is the transcendental realm of Nanda-nandana Krsna, and He performs many kinds of pastimes there.

Now why has Caitanya Mahaprabhu instructed us to worship Nanda-nandana Krsna? Caitanya Mahaprabhu has not instructed us to worship demigods. He did not instruct us to worship Paramatma, the object of worship of the yogis. Nor has He instructed us to worship Brahman and merge in this formless aspect of the Absolute, the object of the jnanis. He has not even

taught us to worship the various forms of Krsna that have been displayed in numerous pastimes, such as Rama, Narasimha, or Vamana. Also, During His pastimes, Krsna, He appears as Mathuradhisa Krsna, Kuruksetra Krsna, and Dvarakadhi sa Krsna. But Caitanya Mahaprabhu has specifically stated that we should worship Nanda-nandana Sri Krsna. Why?

The answer is that we can worship Nanda-nandana Krsna in the context of any possible relationship we desire. On the other hand, we cannot participate in all types of relationships with the Supreme Lord in His form of Narayana. Narayana displays a majestic form of God, so we can only have a relationship of friendship with Him from a distance. Persons fear going near to Narayana because he is playing the role of a majestic king. His devotees may become His friends, but their intimacy is inhibited by fear. Moods like parental affection and conjugal love are absent. Thus those who wish to serve the Supreme Lord as a firm bosom friend, as their son or in a mood of conjugal love, cannot acquire this sort of relationship with the Lord in His Narayana form. Therefore, Narayana cannot be the common center for all devotees.

In Krsna, the cowherdboy of Vrndavana, however, all sorts of intimate relationships are possible and, of all these various forms of worship, the

amorous worship of the gopis for Krsna is the highest. The gopis have engaged all their senses to the fullest extent for the service of Sri Krsna, and amongst the gopis, Sri Radha, the absolute counterpart of Sri Krsna, is the best. She is the personification of His internal potency of ecstatic love and Her devotion to Krsna is beyond comparison.

In Krsna we find twelve rasas. Rasa is the mellow of the relationship, the taste or bliss one experiences in a particular relationship with Krsna. There are five primary rasas (mukhya-rasas), namely santa (neutrality), dasya (servitude), sakhya (friendship), vatsalya (parenthood) and madhurya (consorthood). In addition there are seven secondary or gauna-rasas, namely hasya (laughter), adbhuta (astonishment), vira (heroism), karuna (compassion), raudra (anger), bhayanaka (fear), and bibhatsa (disgust). All these rasas are described in Srimad Bhagavatam. There, it is related how the evil king Kamsa tried to kill Krsna. Kamsa thought, "I will built a great stadium. I shall invite all the inhabitants of Mathura and Vraja to come there to participate. There will be a wrestling match. The wrestlers will fight with Krsna and His brother Balarama and kill them." So Kamsa made arrangements and many visitors came to watch the wrestling in the great stadium. When Krsna and His elder brother Balarama made Their entrance into the wrestling arena, all the spectators saw Krsna in

different ways.

mallanam asanir nrnam nara-varah
strinam smaro murtiman
gopanam sva-jano satam ksiti-bhujam
sasta sva-pitroh sisuh
mrtyur bhoja-pater virad avidusam
tattvam param yoginam
vrsninam para-devateti vidito
rangam gatah sagrajah
(Srimad Bhagavatam 10.43.17)

All the twelve rasas were thus manifested there. The first was vira-rasa: the warrior rasa. The wrestlers saw Krsna in this way. The ordinary spectators saw Krsna as a wonderful human being: adbhuta-rasa. All the gopis were there and they saw Krsna as their most beloved husband -- strinam smaro murtiman.

All the friends of Krsna saw Him as their friend -- gopanam sva-jano. A

joking mood (hasya-rasa) can also be found in relations between friends. For example, Krsna's sakha (friend) Madhumangala steals Krsna's sweets and creates a humorous atmosphere. The humorous is a secondary or gauna-rasa, but the principal rasa is the sakhya-rasa or relation of frienship. In this sakhya-rasa, we see that the hasya-rasa inspires feelings of love.

Those who were of an oppressive nature were afraid when they saw Krsna. They thought that their punisher had come. They were very much afraid, because they saw Krsna as angry and wrathful. This is bhayanaka-rasa. And all the parents saw their beloved child when they saw Krsna -- sva-pitoh sisuh. This is vatsalya-rasa. Karuna-rasa also plays a part in parental affection. Karuna means feelings of sympathy or pity. When they saw the sort of thing was happening before them -- that a small child was opposing those formidable wrestlers -- they felt pity. So this karuna-rasa is included in parental rasa.

Next, Kamsa thought death had come to him -- mrtyur bhoja-pater. He saw seeing Krsna as something dreadful. Krsna is not dreadful, but that is how Kamsa saw Him. The ig norant saw him as a mere man -- virad avidusam. The yogis saw Krsna as the Supreme Truth in santa-rasa while the Yadavas saw Krsna in dasya-rasa, the mood of service. So, we can find all the five

principle rasas and seven secondary rasas in Krsna alone. We can experience all kinds of rasas by serving Krsna, but we cannot obtain the same result by serving any other form of the Lord.

Kaviraja Gosvami has written in Caitanya Caritamrta that fifty kinds of divine qualities can be found in the jiva souls in minute quantity. Five more divine qualities can be found to a fuller extent in Siva and Brahma. Again, five more qualities are present in their full form in Narayana or Visnu. This makes a total of sixty divine characteristics or qualities in all. Now, there are four other qualities that you will not find anywhere else except in Krsna. These qualities are the incomparable sweetness of Krsna's lila (lila-madhurya), the sweetness of His form (rupa-madhurya), the sweet sound of His flute (venu-madhurya), and the sweetness of His love (prema-madhurya). Krsna has many wonderful pastimes in which He assumes a sweet form. He does not appear in a very gigantic figure with all kinds of weapons. Thus, He does not fight with Putana, the witch, but rather appears as a baby He kills her by sucking her breast, exhibiting sweetness toward her. This is the wonder of Krsna's lila. Also we find that even while keeping His own sweet form, Krsna lifts the mountain, Govardhana, with the small finger of His left hand. He does not assume a very great and strong figure to do this. As a small boy Krsna subdued

Kaliya, a great serpent, when He jumped on Kaliya's thousands of heads. In no other form of God will you find such wonderful pastimes.

Krsna's associates are also very sweet. His sakhas climb on His shoulders to pluck fruit from the tops of the trees. They then taste the fruits to see whether they are good before giving them to Krsna. So much affection! So much intimacy! There is no majestic aspect in Vraja. There they think of Krsna as their own bosom friend. Krsna's parents love Him as their very own son. And Krsna's mother Yasoda Devi even tries to discipline Him, thinking that otherwise His future will be bad... God's future will be bad!! And Nanda Maharaja, with great affection, says to Krsna, "O Lala, bring my slippers." What is this? He is ordering Bhagavan to bring him his slippers!! So, Krsna runs to fetch the slippers and puts them on His head. Observing this, Nanda Maharaja thinks that his son will grow up to be very good. Krsna and Nanda Maharaja runs toward each other and they embrace.

Be that as it may, we cannot compare the gopis' love for Krsna to anything else. It is incomparable. And the sound of Krsna's flute! When the gopis hear the sound of the flute they run toward Krsna, leaving behind all other duties and even their own babies. All the mountains melt upon hearing thevamsi-dhvani: the sound of Krsna's flute. By hearing this sound

the river Yamuna begins to flow in the opposite direction. All is so beautiful that even Krsna is attracted by His own beauty and love. There is no one greater than or equal to Him.

Because of Krsna's sweetness Brahma, who has been designated the task of creation by the Supreme Lord, could not recognize Him as the Supreme Lord. Brahma did not believe it when he heard that Krsna, the cowherd boy from Vraja, was God. He thought, "How can He be Svayam-Bhagavan? He is the son of Nanda Maharaja, a milkman and one of my created beings. He cannot be Bhagavan. A cowherd boy has no opulences -- nothing! Bhagavan is the possessor of all opulences, but this Krsna is walking in the jungle with cowherd boys and has no valuable possessions. He wears a garland of forest flowers and has a peacock feather in His hair. How can anyone say that He is Bhagavan? A peasant cannot be Bhagavan."

Now, at that time there was a demon named Aghasura who wanted to kill Krsna and the cowherd boys. Aghasura took the form of a giant snake and opened his mouth wide so that from a distance the cowherd boys thought they were seeing a nice cave. They also saw a road leading to the cave, which was actually the tongue of the snake-demon. So thinking Aghasura's mouth to be a cave, the cowherd boys walked into it and the demon immediately

swallowed them. When Krsna saw what had happened, He decided to save His friends. He followed them into the demon's mouth and started to expand Himself. His body became bigger and bigger and by so doing blocked the snake's throat. The snake could not breath anymore and soon died of suffocation. When he saw that Krsna had killed the demon Aghasura, Brahma began to wonder, "How could a this mere cowherd boy kill such a giant demon?" He then decided to find out whether Krsna was Bhagavan or not.

In the meantime, Krsna, being very fond of picnics, came to the bank of a lake with His friends. The cowherd boys had brought some food for Krsna and had hung it in the trees at the picnic spot earlier so that no one could take it. When they came to that spot, they took their lunch bags down from the trees and began to feed Krsna -- but only after testing the food by tasting it first. If it was good they would say: "Hey Krsna! Kanhaiya! This tastes good, try some!" Then they would give it to Krsna.

Brahma came there at that moment and when he saw Krsna taking the remnants of all of the cowherd boys, he again thought, "This cannot be Bhagavan -- He is nothing more than a peasant." Brahma also saw a mixture of curd and rice in Krsna's left hand. The Vedic scriptures enjoin that one should take food from the right hand, not the left. So Brahma thought, "He does

not know right from left, He cannot be Bhagavan. He is nothing but an ignorant rustic." He also saw that Krsna kept a flute tucked inside his waistband and a horn under his armpit. All the cowherd boys were addressing him in a familiar manner instead of using words of respect. Brahma thought, "Bhagavan should be respected from a distance with prostrated obeisances. One should pay respects to Him with the appropriate formal speech. How could Bhagavan tolerate this behavior?"

At one point, the cowherd boys said to Krsna, "We have to go and get the calves, otherwise it will be late when we get back home." But Krsna replied, "No, you stay here and rest, I will get the calves." Now, when Krsna went looking for the calves, He could not find them because Brahma had stolen them and had hidden them in a cave. Krsna became sad and asked everyone He saw, "Our calves are lost, have you seen them? How can I go back home without them?"

By the time Krsna had returned to the picnic spot, Brahma had also stolen all the cowherd boys and taken to the same cave in Mount Sumeru where he had earlier hidden the calves. Now that He had lost all the calves and the cowherd boys, Krsna sat down and wept. Brahma observed this and smiled. He thought with great satisfaction, "Bhagavan knows everything. If Krsna were

the Supreme Lord, He could have taken back the calves forcibly. But He does not know where the calves and boys are and He is incapable of r ecovering them. So I was right, He is just an ordinary cowherd boy." And so he left.

After Brahma had gone, Krsna also smiled and expanded Himself into as many calves and cowherd boys as Brahma had stolen. Thus when He returned home, the cows were not even aware that they had lost their calves, and the gopas and gopis were equally unaware that they had lost their children. Everything is possible for Krsna. To fulfill the desires of the gopas and gopis who would have liked to have Him as their son, Krsna came to them as their sons. The gopas and gopis had always thought that Nanda and Yasoda were so lucky to have Krsna as their son. Now that He came to them as their own sons, they could not recognize Him, but as soon as they touched them, they experienced an overwhelming sense of love that can only be had from Krsna. They drowned in the ocean of ananda.

The cows of Vrndavana were not ordinary cows. They had all been sages in their previous lives. Cows normally have affection for their own young calves, but now that Krsna had taken the form of their calves, they tore the ropes that bound them and went rushing toward them. They were even

running through thorns and getting cut and bleeding all over, such was the extent of their love. Due to their yearning for Krsna, Krsna Himself had come as their calves to suckle their breasts. Krsna came for an entire year for that reason alone -- to satisfy them and fulfill their desires.

After one year, Brahma came back. He saw the same calves and cowherd boys that had been there before. He thought, "Impossible! It can't be. I imprisoned them all in the mountain cave. I cannot understand this." Thinking in this way, he went back to to the cave in Mount Sumeru and saw that the same calves and same cowherd boys were still sleeping there. Once again he returned to Vrndavana and saw that the cows and cowherd boys were there as well. Brahma could then understand the situation and he thought, " All creatures are deluded by my illusions, but now I myself have been deluded by my Master." He then took absolute shelter of Krsna and prayed for forgiveness. Once he had taken shelter, Krsna was gracious and came and showed Brahma His majestic four-handed Vasudeva form in each of the cowherd boys and in each of the calves. Brahma then said:

naumidya te 'bhra-vapuse tadid-ambaraya
gunjavatamsa-paripiccha-lasan-mukhaya
vanya-sraje kavala-vetra-visana-venu-

laksma-sriye mrdu-pade pasupangajaya

(Srimad Bhagavatm 10.14.1)

"You are the highest object of worship. I know this to be true: You are the cause of all causes, the source of all avataras. You are the possessor of all rasas. Your body is the color of the rain-bearing clouds. Your garment is brilliant like lightning, and the beauty of Your face is enhanced by Your gunja earrings and the peacock feather in your hair. Wearing garlands of various forest flowers and leaves, and equipped with a herding stick, a buffalo horn and a flute, You stand beautifully with a morsel of food in Your hand."

Thus Brahma recognized the supremacy of the sweetest of lords, Sri Krsna. Nowhere in the entire creation is there any comparison.

In Krsna lila we find that one day, there were no servants in Nanda Maharaja's house. So mother Yasoda went herself to churn butter from the milk. While she was churning the milk, the young child Krsna came to her. Krsna had just learned how to walk and was playing the pastime of being hungry. He said, "O mother, stop churning, I am hungry. Give me milk!" To

this Yasoda replied, "There are no servants here and so I am busy. Don't disturb me."

After hearing this, Krsna, with His beautiful small hand, grabbed hold of the churning stick. Yasoda was charmed and put the child on her lap to breastfeed Him, but at that very instant, the milk on the stove started to boil over. So, Yasoda said to Gopala, "Get down, the milk is boiling." But Krsna's appetite had not been appeased and He did not want to get down. He said, "Give me more milk." Yasoda thrust Krsna down and ran to the stove. Krsna became very angry because of this and wanted to break the pot containing the yogurt. Though He was still afraid of His mother, He silently struck the pot with a small stone until it broke and all the curd spilled onto the floor. Then, seeing other pots hanging from the ceiling, He climbed onto the mortar and broke them all.

Sometimes the other gopis complained to Yasoda and Nanda Maharaja. They complained that Krsna was very naughty and would come to their houses at night. They said, "We light lamps to keep the thieves away, but your boy blows them out. Then He steals our butter." Nanda would ask Krsna, "Kanhaiya, did you do this?" "No father, I did not. They are telling lies." Krsna put on a very innocent face, like a sadhu or a saint. When

his parents saw this innocent expression, they thought it impossible that He could have done such a thing. Nanda Maharaja would answer the gopis' charges, "I have thousands of cows. I am the king of Vraja. Why should my son go to another house to steal butter?" The reason was that Krsna sometimes wanted to go to other people's houses to give them a chance to serve Him. Normally His parents would not allow Him to go anywhere else to eat. They love Krsna too much themselves. That is why He sometimes acts like a thief, to give all His devotees a chance to serve Him, to fulfill their desires. So, outwardly, it seemed as though Krsna was destroying everything and spoiling the yogurt by eating it and feeding it to the monkeys. In fact, the yogurt had been prepared from the milk of cows who desired that it be used in His service. So actually Krsna was giving everybody a chance to serve Him in this way.

When Yasoda returned from the stove she saw what mischief Krsna had wrought. He had destroyed all the pots and was feeding the monkeys. As a result, she wanted to punish Him. She thought, "If I do not teach Him a lesson, His character will be spoiled." So, Yasoda decided to cane the Supreme Lord Bhagavan to correct His character. She approached Krsna silently, hoping to catch Him by surprise. But just when she was about to catch Him, Krsna jumped up and ran away. Soon Yasoda was chasing Krsna all

over the courtyard, but she quickly became tired and started to move more slowly. Though nobody is able to catch Krsna, He Himself slowed down and allowed her to catch Him because of her pure affection for Him.

Yasoda said, "What have you done? I shall cane you!" Krsna was afraid of the cane in His mother's hand and started to cry. Even the god of death fears Krsna, the Supreme Lord, but He is afraid when he sees a cane in the hand of His mother. How is it possible? This is Vraja prema. The Vrajavasis do not see Krsna as God. They only love Him with all their hearts.

Then Yasoda felt pity for Krsna and decided instead to fasten Him with some rope so He could do no more mischief. She tried to tie the rope around His belly, but it was two inches too short. Again and again she brought more rope, but it was always too short. So though we see on the one hand that Krsna was limited like a small boy, in fact He is unlimited even in His apparent limitation.

Why was the rope always two inches short? What is the significance of this? One inch represents the grace of Krsna, the other, the sincere service with which we can attract His grace. Yasoda never stops in her service of

Krsna, and that is why in the end Krsna allowed her to bind Him with the ropes of her love. We must also make the same kind of sincere effort to serve Guru and Vaisnava; then we will be able to attract their grace.

Srila Rupa Gosvami has written this song:

bandhu sange jadi taba ranga parihas thake abhilas
tabe mor katha rakha jeyo naka jeyo naka
vrndavane kesitirtha ghater sakas
nayane bankima-drsti mukhe manda-has

"If you still desire to amuse yourself with your friends, you should not go to Vrndavana. And if you go to Vrndavana, you should especially not go to Kesi Ghat. There is a danger lurking there. What is that danger? It is Sri Hari, Krsna Himself, who has taken the form of Govinda, Govinda vigraha dhari.. The danger is that if you go there and see Him, if you have a vision of Govinda, you will not be able to return to the customary amusements of your ordinary household life."

The look of His eyes, His crooked glance is very dangerous -- nayane bankima-drsti mukhe manda-has. He is not standing straight, but in

tri-bhanga, with three curves. If this Krsna enters you, He will not come out. If Narayana enters, He may come out. Narayana is straight. But Krsna is curved like a hook and that is dangerous.

His color is like that of a rain cloud -- varna samujjvala syama.. You will find that in the springtime the leaves of the trees are so fresh.
Similarly, Krsna is not old, but a young adolescent. The lips of His mouth are very dangerous and if you see the peacock feather on His head, you will not be able to come back to your household life. So, if you want to have fun with your friends, you should not go to Vrndavana, and you should not look at Krsna.

Unfortunately, we go to Vrndavana and still come back. We do not have such devotion. If anybody truly had the greed for Govinda, he could not return to his mundane life. His worldly relations would be destroyed. Greed for devotion is developed by associating with the pure devotees of the Lord.
By their grace it becomes possible for us to attain Krsna prema, divine love of God, the ultimate goal of life.

Pronunciation Guide

The system of transliteration used in this book conforms to a system that scholars have accepted to indicate the pronunciation of each sound in the Sanskrit language.

The short vowel a is pronounced like the u in but, long a like the a in far. The short i is pronounced as in pin, the long i as in pique, the short u as in pull, and the long u as in rule.

The vowel r is pronounced like the ri in rim, e like the ey in they, o like the o in go, ai like the ai in aisle, and au like the ow in how.

The anusvara (m) is pronounced like the n in the French word bon, and visarga (h) is pronounced as a final h sound. At the end of a couplet ah is pronounced as aha, and ih is pronounced as ihi.

The guttural consonants -k, kh, g, gh, and n- are pronounced from the throat in much the same manner as in English. K is pronounced as in kite, kh as in Eckhart, g as in give, gh as in dig hard, n as in sing.

The palatal consonants -c, ch , j, jh and n- are pronounced with the tongue touching the firm ridge behind the teeth. C is pronounced as in chair, ch as in staunch-heart, j as in joy, jh as in hedgehog, and n as in canyon.

The cerebral consonants -t, th, d, dh, n- are pronounced with the tip of the tongue turned up and drawn back against the dome of the palate. T is pronounced as in tub, th as in light-heart, d as in dove, dh as in red-hot, and n as in nut.

The dental consonants - t, th, d, dh, and n- are pronounced in the same manner as the cerebrals, but with the forepart of the tongue against the teeth.

The labial consonants -p, ph, b, bh, and m- are pronounced with the lips. P is pronounced as in pine, ph as in uphill, b as in bird, bh as in rub-hard, and m as in mother.

The semivowels -y, r, l, and v- are pronounced as in yes, run, light, and vine respectively.

The sibilants -s, s, and s- are pronounced, respectively, as in the German word sprechen and the English words shine and sun. The letter h is pronounced.

Glossary

Abhidheya: the means of attaining the ultimate goal of life (see also sadhana).

Ahankara: false ego; the most subtle material layer that covers the spirit soul (jiva).

Ananda: ecstatic bliss.

Apara sakti: material potency of the Lord (see also maya-sakti).

Atma: soul; either refers to the individual soul (jivatma) or the Supersoul (paramatma).

Avatara: divine descent; the Supreme Lord appearing in this world in His

own transcendental form (without accepting a physical body), to carry out a specific task, like re-establishing the principles of religion or killing the demoniac.

Avatari: the original form from which all avataras originate; Supreme Lord Sri Krsna.

Bhagavan: God or Krsna, the possessor of six opulences–all majesty, all prowess, all fame, all beauty, all wisdom and all detachment.

Bhakta: devotee.

Bhakti: devotion to God.

Brahma: the creator of the Universe, designated to this task by Lord Krsna.

Brahman: the all-pervading effulgence coming from the transcendental body of Lord Krsna; the impersonal aspect of Godhead.

Buddhi: intelligence.

Caitanya Mahaprabhu: The divine descent (avatara) of Lord Krsna, appearing 500 years ago to inaugurate the congregational chanting of the Holy Names for attaining love of God, the religion for kali-yaga.

Cit: pure consciousness.

Darsana: seeing the divine.

Dasya-rasa: mellow of servitude in relation to Sri Krsna.

Gauna-rasa: the seven secondary rasas, namely: hasya-, adbhuta-, vira-, karuna-, raudra-, bhayanaka-, and vi-bhatsa-rasa. These correspond respectively to laughter, astonishment, heroism, compassion, anger, fear, and disgust.

Gopa: cowherd boy; eternal associates of Krsna in Vrndavana, who serve Him in the mood of bosom-friends. See also sakha.

Gopi: cowherd girl; eternal associates of Krsna in Vrndavana, headed by Srimati Radharani, who serve Him in the mood of amorous love. See also sakhi.

Guna: (1) quality or mode of material nature, three in number: sattva-, rajo- and tamo-guna. (2) Krsna's transcendental qualities.

Guru: one who is ‘heavy' with transcendental knowledge; spiritual preceptor.

Hari: another name for God or Krsna.

Harinama: indicates the glorification and singing of the Names of Krsna.

Jiva: (or jivatma) individual atomic soul.

Jiva-sakti: the marginal potency of the Lord, from where unlimited jivas manifest.

Jnana: knowledge aimed at impersonal brahman-realization, resulting in liberation.

Jnani: practitioner of jnana.

Kali-yuga: the fourth and most degraded of the cosmic ages. According to the Vedas this age started 5000 years ago and will last another 427,000 years.

Kama: lust.

Karma: (1) materially motivated action which yields an equal and opposite reaction (fate). (2) reward-seeking activity.

Karmi: practitioner of karma.

Krsna: the original bhagavan, the Supreme Lord and avatari, Who performs His eternal lila as a cowherd-boy in Goloka Vrndavana (see also Vrndavana).

Lila: the transcendental sportive pastimes of Lord Krsna.

Madhurya-rasa: mellow of consorthood in relation to Sri Krsna.

Manas: the mind.

Maya: illusion.

Maya-sakti: illusory potency of the Lord. (see also apara sakti).

Nama-sankirtana: congregational chanting of the Holy Names of the Lord; best method for Kali-yuga to attain love of God, the ultimate goal of life.

Mukhya-rasa: the five primary rasas, namely: santa-, dasya-, sakhya-, vatsalya-, and madhurya-rasa.

Para sakti: spiritual potency of the Lord (see also svarupa-sakti).

Paramatma: the Supersoul, the form of Krsna residing in the heart of every living being

Prasada: sanctified remnants of the articles offered to the Lord; usually refers to offered food.

Prayojana: the ultimate goal of life, Krsna-prema.

Prema: Divine love of God, the ultimate goal of life.

Puja: worship of the deity of the Lord with various items.

Radha: (also called Radharani) the Absolute feminine counterpart of Lord Krsna; the most beloved of Krsna; the personification of Krsna's internal potency.

Raga: spontaneous attraction.

Raganuga bhakti: bhakti that is awakened in the heart out of a spontaneous desire to serve the Lord affectionately in the wake of the Eternal Associates of Lord Krsna, known as Ragatmikas.

Ragatmika bhakti: the loving devotion of the eternal associates of Lord Krsna for His divine pleasure alone, accompanied with complete self-effacement on the part of the eternal associates.

Raja-guna: the material mode of passion.

Rasa: ‘taste' or ‘juice', referring to the transcendental mellows that are

experienced in relation to the Supreme Lord Sri Krsna.

Sadhana: spiritual practice.

Sadhu: saint; pure devotee

Sakha: transcendental boyfriend of Krsna.

Sakhi: transcendental girlfriend of Krsna.

Sakhya-rasa: mellow of friendship in relation to

Sri Krsna.

Sakti: potency.

Sambandha: relationship.

Sankirtana: congregational glorification of the Lord.

Santa-rasa: mellow of neutrality in relation to

Sri Krsna.

Saranagati: full surrender to Krsna or His representative, the spiritual master or suddha-bhakta.

Sat: eternal.

Sattva-guna: the material mode of goodness.

Siva: God of destruction.

Sraddha: faith in the Lord which manifests in the association of sadhus as a result of previous pious deeds (sukrti).

Suddha: pure.

Suddha-bhakta: pure devotee.

Suddha bhakti: pure devotion.

Sukrti: pious activity which produces faith in the Lord and the process of bhakti.

Svarupa-sakti: internal potency of the Lord (see also para sakti).

Tamo-guna: the material mode of ignorance.

Upadhi: material designation.

Vaidhi-bhakti: regulated devotion, which follows the guidelines of the scriptures.

Vaisnava: devotee of Visnu or Krsna.

Vatsalya-rasa: mellow of parenthood in relation to Sri Krsna.

Visnu: the primary expansion of Krsna, Who is in control of the material creation.

Vedas: the revealed scriptures of India.

Vraja: see Vrndavana.

Vrajavasis: inhabitants of Vraja.

Vrndavana: ‘Forest of Vrnda-trees', Transcendental abode of Lord Krsna. The transcendental Vrndavana situated in the spiritual realm is called Goloka Vrndavana, whereas the earthly Vrndavana indicates the place where Krsna performed His manifest lila 5000 years ago, as the tradition holds. This earthly Vrndavana is situated 120 kilometers south of the present city of New Delhi.

Yoga: (1) any spiritual discipline meant to link or unite oneself with the Supreme; (2) practice of meditation.

Yogi: a person who practices self-control and meditative practices in order to attain salvation from material life.

Yuga: an age of the cosmic time cycle into which infinite time has been divided according to the Vedas. The four yugas are Satya, Treta, Dvapara, and Kali.

Upadesavali

Srila Prabhupada Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakur

1. "Param vijayate sri krsna sankirtanam - supreme victory to the congregational chanting of Krsna's names"- this is Sri Gaudiya Matha's sole object of worship.

2. Sri Krsna, who is the visaya-vigraha or the object of the devotees prema, is the sole enjoyer and all others are to be enjoyed by Him.

3. Those who don't perform hari-bhajana are ignorant and murderers of their own souls.

4. The acceptance of Sri Harinama and direct realization of Bhagavan are one and the same.

5. Those who equate the demigods with Visnu are unable to serve Bhagavan.

6. Establishing a printing press to print devotianal books and preaching by organizing nama-hatta programs constitutes genuine service to Sri Mayapura.

7. We are not doers of good or bad deeds, nor are we scholars or illiterate. Carrying the shoes of Hari's pure devotees as our duty, we are initiates into the mantra "kirtanayah sada hari".

8. Preaching without proper conduct falls within the category of karma, mundane activity. Without criticizing the nature of others, one should correct one's self - this is my personal instruction.

9. Serving the Vrajavasis who felt great separation from Krsna when He left vraja to reside in Mathura is our supreme constitutional occupation.

10. If we desire to follow an auspicious course in life, then we should disregard the theories of even countless people and hear instructions from a transcendental source.

11. Life as an animal, bird, insect or any other of the countless thousands of species is acceptable, but taking shelter of deceit is thoroughly improper. Only an honest person possesses real auspiciousness.

12. Simple-heartedness is synonymous with Vaisnavism. Servants of a paramahamsa Vaisnava should be simple-hearted, a quality which makes them the topmost brahmanas.

13. Helping to draw conditioned souls away from their perverted attachment to the material energy is the greatest compassion. If even one soul is rescued from Mahamaya's fortress, that compassionate act is infinitely more benevolent than the construction of unlimited hospitals.

14. We have not come to this world to be construction workers; we are the bearers of Sri Caitanya's instructions.

15. We will not remain in this world for long, and by profusely performing Hari-kirtana, upon relinquishing this material bodies we will experience

the ultimate reward of embodied life.

16. The foot-dust of Sri Rupa Gosvami, the fulfiller of Sri Caitanyadeva's inner desires, is the desired object of our soul.

17. If I were to desist from lecturing about the Absolute Truth due to being fearful that some listeners may be displeased, I would be deviating from the path of Vedic truth and accepting the path of untruth. I would become one who is inimical to the Vedas, an atheist, and would no longer possess faith in Bhagavan, the very embodiment of truth.

18. Krsna's darsana can only be attained through the medium of the ear as one hears Hari-katha from pure Vaisnavas; there is no other way.

19. Wherever Hari-katha is being spoken is a holy place.

20. Proper sravana, hearing, is accomplished through the medium of kirtana, and this will give one the good opportunity to practice smarana, remembrance. Then the internal experience of rendering direct service to the asta-kaliya-lila, Sri Radha-Krsna's pastimes in each of the eight parts of the day, becomes possible.

21. We should understand that the loud calling out of Sri Krsna's names is bhakti.

22. Bhagavan will not accept anything which is offered by a person who doesn't chant Harinama one hundred thousand times daily.

23. By sincerely endeavoring to chant Harinama without offences and remaining fixed in chanting constantly, one's offences will fade and pure Harinama will arise on one's tongue.

24. If mundane thoughts arise while taking Harinama, one should not become discouraged. A secondary consequence of taking Harinama is that these useless mundane thoughts will gradually dissipate; therefore one should not worry about this. By devoting one's mind, body and words to serving Sri Nama and continuing to chant with great persistence, Sri Nama Prabhu will grant one darsana of His supremely auspicious transcendental form. And by continuing to chant until one's anarthas are fully eradicated, realization of His form, qualities and pastimes will automatically arise by the power of Sri Nama.